



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10**

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OFFICE OF  
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

September 13, 2010

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader  
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
3888 SR 101  
Illwaco, Washington 98624-9707

RE: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) comments for the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer (Refuges) Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/FEIS). EPA Project Number: 10-013-FWS

Dear Mr. Stenvall:

EPA has reviewed your FEIS and we are submitting comments in accordance with our responsibilities under NEPA and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA).

We continue to concur with your conclusions about the positive effects of the preferred alternatives and support their selection on both Refuges. Expanding partnerships for invasive species, research and land management will increase the Refuges' capacity to be effective. Eliminating time limits on coyote management appears necessary to maximize Columbia White-tailed deer recovery efforts. Improving interpretive media and developing appropriate land and water trails will raise the public's awareness of the unique and important roles of the Refuges. All of these elements - which are limited to your preferred alternatives - would result in substantial environmental and social positive effects.

In our comments on the Draft EIS (DEIS) we recommended that the FEIS include additional information on the process that the Refuges intend to follow to deal with climate changes in the lower Columbia River estuary. No changes appear to have been made in the FEIS. We continue to encourage the Refuges' efforts to identify key decision points in advance of anticipated climate change impacts.

We also recommend that the Final CCP/EIS include additional clarifying information on water quality issues in the Columbia River estuary. It does not appear that new water quality information has been included in the FEIS. Our intention is to encourage the Refuges to proactively account for potential adverse impacts to refuge resources from water quality issues in the Columbia River. Understanding the state of science on these water quality issues is an important aspect of any effective management strategy. We believe the related resources referenced in our DEIS letter may help to better define these water quality issues.

We appreciate your efforts to protect native ecosystem processes as well as your efforts to ensure our comments are accounted for in the Record of Decision. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Erik Peterson of my staff at (206) 553-6382 or by electronic mail at [peterston.erik@epa.gov](mailto:peterston.erik@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Christine B. Reichgott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christine" and last name "Reichgott" clearly legible, and a middle initial "B." in between.

Christine Reichgott, Manager  
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit